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MEXICAN SCHOOL BOYS AND GIRLS WERE EXCUSED FROM CLASSES TO WELCOME LINDBERGH (see Bulletin No. 1)

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Do You "Know Too Little About Mexico"?

"WE KNOW too little about Mexico," said Colonel Charles Lindbergh before hopping off on his Good-Will flight to the Mexican capital.

Mexico is an amazing country of astonishing contrasts worthy of thorough study. It is exceedingly rich in natural resources, yet a part of its population lives in poverty. It had a university before John Harvard was born, yet many of its people are illiterate. Modern equipages and machines are to be seen side by side with the most primitive vehicles and devices. And desert sands and tropical jungles can be found almost within a stone's throw of eternal snow.

Mexico Larger Than United States East of the Mississippi River

The Mexico of to-day has an area of about 770,000 square miles—approximately a quarter that of the United States. Once the area of Mexico was two-thirds that of the United States. The difference is made up of territory (half that of the old Mexico) that has been transferred from Mexico to the United States—Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, California, and parts of Wyoming, Colorado, Kansas and Oklahoma. Yet Mexico as it exists to-day is four times the size of France. Roughly, half of the long shore line of the Gulf of Mexico is Mexican, and its Pacific coast is nearly a thousand miles longer than that of the United States exclusive of Alaska.

But though Mexico has an area of great extent, what may be called the real Mexico is much smaller. Throughout the history of Mexico, both before the coming of the Spanish conquerors and since, the culture of the country and its center of population have been on the great central plateau which rises between the two oceans. Particularly have its civilizations concentrated in the south-central part of that region. A section of the plateau occupying not more than one-sixth of the country contains nearly two-thirds of the total population. This portion of the country, of which the Valley of Mexico and the City of Mexico are near the center, has a delightful climate. Blankets are used at night the year round, but seldom at any time of the year is an overcoat needed at midday.

The northern portion of Mexico is largely occupied by deserts. The southern section is tropical—a country of steamy moisture and jungles. Both coasts are hot and unpleasant for mile upon mile. It is natural enough, therefore, that the central plateau has played an important part in the country's history.

The Mexican Farmer Lives in a Village

Mexico is essentially a rural country. Mexico City, the capital, with its million inhabitants, is the only city of large size within the country's borders. Between the metropolis and the next largest city, Guadalajara, is a great gulf, for the latter, with its population of 120,000, is slightly smaller than Nashville, Tennessee, or Salt Lake City. Monterey, the greatest city of northern Mexico, and third in the country, is approximately the size of Charleston, South Carolina, and San Luis Potosi is the size of Racine, Wisconsin; while Vera Cruz, the greatest port of the Republic and fifth city, is smaller than Topeka, Kansas. Salina Cruz and the other Pacific ports are little more than villages with extensive docks. As a rule the cities of Mexico are not manufacturing centers but are the markets for the surrounding agricultural country or mining regions.

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PILGRIMS ENCAMPED OUTSIDE MECCA

The importance of Mecca is not so much due to its resident population of 100,000, as to the more than 200,000 pilgrims who visit it annually. When the pilgrim, who may have been on the way for two years from a distant place, reaches a point five or six miles from the sacred city he performs his ablutions and prayers, then lays aside his regular wearing apparel and dons two seamless wrappers. For the remainder of the journey he goes without shoes or head covering. During the period of ceremonial he neither shaves nor trims his nails (see Bulletin No. 2).

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Medina Connected with Mecca by Bus Line

A BUS line is reported to be operating between Mecca and Medina, holy cities of the Moslem world.

This bus line, in the opinion of devout Mohammedans, connects the "first city in the world" with the "second city in the world." It also links Mecca with the pilgrim railroad from Damascus which ends at Medina.*

Mecca and Medina have been first in peace, first in war, and first in the religious devotions of Moslems the world over for thirteen centuries. The fact that Mohammedanism was planted in Mecca, but made no growth until transplanted to Medina, mirrors the physical differences between the two towns. While Mecca is set down in a steppe which is almost a desert, and while its inhabitants, ever since the place has been known, have made their livelihood as merchants (and caravan raiders), Medina is situated in an oasis and has always had strong agricultural ties. Its valuable groves produce 139 varieties of dates, some famous throughout the Near East.

Mohammedans Date from Prophet's Trip from Mecca to Medina

Although a town had long existed on the site of the present Medina, it was small, and the Hegira or flight of Mohammed "made" Medina almost as truly as the trek of the Mormons made Salt Lake City. This moving day of Mohammed and his little group of Meccan followers is of such importance to Moslems that it was made their year one, and on it their calendar is based. The event occurred in 622 A. D. of the Christian system.

From the Moslem year one to the year ten Mohammed lived in Medina, where he dictated his revelations to a scribe, completing the Koran, the Bible of Islam. During these ten years, too, he conducted, from the Medina base, expeditions of his militant followers against Meccans and other Arabians, thus beginning the spread of Mohammedanism by the sword, a practice that was to remake the map of much of the world. From Medina, Mecca was captured. Because Mecca's Kabah had been the object of pilgrimages for ages, the city was made the spiritual center of Mohammedanism and the old pagan shrine was dedicated to Allah.

Medina remained the temporal capital, and Mohammed continued to live there and to preach in the Medina mosque. He died in the year ten in the house of one of his wives adjoining the mosque and was buried beneath the floor where he died. Seventy-nine years later, when the mosque was rebuilt, its walls were extended to include Mohammed's grave. The presence of this bit of holy ground within the courtyard of "the Mosque of the Prophet" and the residence of Mohammed in the city for the last ten years of his life are Medina's chief claims to reverence from Moslems.

Only Moslems Permitted in Medina, Too

The mosque is not an imposing structure. Only in its main gateway is there any pretense at decoration. In the courtyard, beside the grave of Mohammed, is the burial place of Abu Bekr, his father-in-law and his immediate successor as Caliph. Nearby also is the grave of Omar, the second Caliph after Mohammed;

* "Mecca to Damascus Railway: One Thousand Miles of Railway Built for Pilgrims and Not for Dividends," 13 illustrations, National Geographic Magazine, February, 1909.

While Mexico is largely agricultural, and therefore rural, its country life is strikingly different from that with which farm-bred residents of the United States are familiar. Seldom is an isolated farmhouse to be found; most of the tillers of the soil live in little villages. They go back and forth to their work, which is usually on the land of others. These innumerable villages give one the impression of being standardized and are difficult to tell apart. They are made up of low, rectangular flat-topped huts of mud bricks or adobe, and are huddled closely together. Between the forbidding walls of these tomb-like dwellings the tropic sun beats down on a narrow, dusty street.

In addition to these more or less independent villages of the common people there are to be found in parts of the country the haciendas or great ranches of the landed proprietors, on which are other groups of the inevitable flat-roofed huts, the dwellings of the rancher's peons. In the hot country of the south are extensive plantations of bananas, rubber trees, cacao and other special tropical products. These plantations are often operated by foreigners, and on them small armies of day laborers are employed.

Land Holdings Are Concentrated

Because Mexico for hundreds of thousands of years has formed a bridge between North and South America, it had become something of a "melting pot" before the United States took up that rôle. And after the arrival of the European conquerors the racial mixture was made still more complex by the addition of Spanish blood. In the Mexico of to-day less than 20 per cent of the inhabitants are pure whites, nearly one-half are of mixed white and Indian blood, and the remainder are Indians.

It is estimated that about 7,000 of the 3,000,000 families of Mexico own all the tillable land. Since manufacturing enterprises and commercial pursuits are not sufficient to employ any large proportion of the inhabitants of the country, the great majority of the population must be jobless unless employed on the land of the relatively few landed proprietors. This landlessness of Mexico's masses and the lack of any appreciable middle class has been one of the principal causes of the many revolutions that have torn the country. Efforts have been made from time to time to reform the situation, but with little success.

Mexico's large unassimilated Indian population and its even larger population in which Indian traits predominate make a certain degree of turbulence a natural condition in the republic south of the Rio Grande. The United States had not so long ago on its frontiers its Indian uprisings, its stage-coach and train robberies, and its "bad men" with a penchant for "shooting up" towns. Parts of Mexico are still in this frontier stage of development.*

* For further information on Mexico and hundreds of illustrations depicting the geography, the peoples and products consult 43 articles on the Republic listed in the Cumulative Index to the National Geographic Magazine which may be found in city and up-to-date school libraries. Notable recent articles on Mexico are: "Adventuring Down the West Coast of Mexico," November, 1922; "Along the Old Spanish Road in Mexico," March, 1923, and "Chichen Itza, an Ancient American Mecca," January, 1925.

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The Useful Shark

A FLOATING factory for converting sharks into products of commerce like shoe leather, medicine, glue, oil and fertilizer has been fitted out in western Australia.

Numerous similar ventures in various parts of the world are bringing more and more shark products to market; the terror of the seas has succumbed to the multiplying needs of civilization, especially the need for leather.

Not many years ago the cattle on the western plains and on the farms averaged about one animal to each person in the United States, but to-day there is not much more than half a beef animal for each inhabitant of the country.

Nearly All Sharks Are Flesh-Eating Fishes

The U. S. Bureau of Standards has tested the comparative durability of upper leather made from sharkskin as compared with that from calfskin and cowhide. The cooperation of the shoe manufacturers has been obtained in the making of the necessary shoes for the tests.

Sharks are regarded as the most rapacious, bloodthirsty and cruel of all the inhabitants of the sea.* All the known species of sharks, with four exceptions, are flesh-eating fishes. Sharks are long and cylindrical, the body terminating in a sharp snout in front and a long and flattened tail behind. The mouth is placed crosswise and usually is on the lower surface of the head, some distance behind the tip of the snout. Almost all sharks are marine, though many will follow their prey into the mouths of rivers. Their teeth are arranged in triangular sets, the first or outer row alone being used while the rest are turned back out of the way. When those of the first row are lost, those of the next row take their place.

The fins, with their abundant cartilage, form the basis of the supply of gelatine in China.

Sharkskin for Sword Handles

The livers are taken for the oil they contain. They are placed in water and cooked either by steam or by fire, and then the oil is skimmed off. In former times they were "sun-tried"—placed in water and allowed to stand in the sun for several days. The quality of oil produced by this method (which is still pursued in Labrador and Newfoundland) is much better than that obtained by the more modern methods, but the difference in quantity is considerable. Quantity and quality vary with the season. The oil is of value in dressing leather, soap making, fish glue, paints, and for medicinal purposes. The yield varies from less than a pint in some of the smaller sharks to about 125 gallons in the larger sizes.

At one time large quantities of the hides, cleaned but not tanned, were used for polishing wood, ivory, and metal. With improvements in methods of preparation of sandpaper and emery, these have largely replaced animal hides. Small quantities of certain classes of skin are still in demand among cabinetmakers, and have other special uses, as in the manufacture of optical fittings. Peculiar markings, such as transverse bands or elongated spots, and the character of the small, close set, variously sculptured lime-like particles which cover the skin, have adapted some skins for sword grips, card cases, jewel boxes and other novelties.

* See "The Book of Fishes," by John Oliver La Gorce and other authorities, published by the National Geographic Society.

and at a little distance is the resting place of Fatima, the Prophet's favorite daughter. The burial plot of the three Caliphs is surrounded by a high fence of iron and brass network so closely woven that the streams of pilgrims who file by catch only glimpses of the interior. Only mosque officials and great dignitaries ever enter the sacred precincts.

Medina, like Mecca, is forbidden ground to non-Moslems, and before the Great War it was actually less known to the outside world than the spiritual center of Islam itself. Capture by the British of a detailed Turkish map and photographs of the city and the surrounding country furnished the first authentic information since the making of a sketch by Burton seventy years before.

Medina preserves its inviolability in spite of the fact that it is the terminus of a more or less modern railway. This, the famous "pilgrim railway" from Damascus into the Hedjaz, was built by the Turks between 1900 and 1908, largely with contributions from the faithful. Practical western diplomats, however, saw marked military value in the line, and their judgment proved correct during the Great War. Because of the road, Turkey was able to hold Medina against the Arab rebellion until 1919.

"One Prayer Offered in Medina Is Worth a Thousand Elsewhere"

Before the war, Medina, like Mecca, profited greatly from pilgrims from all parts of the Moslem world. While a visit to Mecca was practically compulsory, the trip to Medina was voluntary, but gave additional merit. A drawing factor is the assertion by Mohammedans that "one prayer offered in the Mosque of the Prophet is worth a thousand elsewhere." Because of this many "prayer brokers" did a thriving business, receiving fees from distant clients for offering up prayers in their behalf.

Many thousands of pilgrims from northern Syria and Asia Minor, bound for Mecca, passed through Medina because of the railway, and many more came from Africa because the city is especially holy to their sects. In addition many of the pilgrims who went directly to Mecca made the additional pilgrimage to the second holy city, and to Medina's profit these were often the more wealthy travelers. Hundreds of pilgrims remain in Medina each year, and its pre-war population was exceedingly cosmopolitan.

Medina House Beams Used for Locomotive Fuel During War

The war greatly injured Medina. The Turkish garrison deported nearly three-fourths of the population during the siege by Arabs, reducing its numbers from 40,000 to about 10,000. Many houses were pulled down so that their beams might be used for locomotive fuel, and inroads were made into the valuable palm plantations near the city for the same purpose.

Medina is 130 miles inland from the Red Sea and is without rail connection with its port, Yambo. The city is just north of the Tropic of Cancer on about the same parallel of latitude as Durango, Mexico, and Key West. At an elevation of 2,300 feet, it has a much more pleasant climate than sweltering Mecca. Save for a large open space within the walls where the Moslem equivalent of "automobile tourist" camps during pilgrimage, the city has narrow, dark streets. Many of the houses are substantial structures of granite or lava blocks, some four and five stories high. Medina means "city" and it is sometimes written "Medinat-en-Nebi," "City of the Prophet."

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Mukden, Which Meets an Immigrant Flood from Shantung

WHILE newspapers chronicle war in China on many fronts a great immigration is under way which has been obscured by the drama of military operations.

More than a million individuals are said to have emigrated during the past year from the populous peninsula of Shantung to Manchuria. The city which has received the greatest weight of China on the move is Mukden. Yet Mukden cannot be truly called a Chinese city.

Mukden, Manchuria, home town of China's Northern War Lord, is really three cities in one.

Modern Japanese business and residential blocks surround the railway station where the traveler from Chosen (Korea) or Peking alights. A disreputable vehicle with lines reminiscent of old Russia bears the tourist through a straggling European quarter to the gates of the high-walled Chinese city two miles away. Japanese, Russians and Chinamen meet but do not mingle. Each nation has a city of its own.

American Consulate Housed in Temple Buildings

The Japanese quarter is a splendid example of colonial efficiency. Streets are straight, broad and hard paved. Bazaars are filled with the latest products from Japanese farms and factories—luscious yellow persimmons, dainty tea sets, and gorgeous flowered cotton kimono cloth done up in one-garment bolts. There are hospitals, schools and police stations, electric lighted and presided over by the latest products of the imperial educational system. Over the railway station is an excellent European style hotel, complete with brass beds and tile baths.

A short drive in the rickety Russian droshky and all is changed. The air grows heavier with strange odors. Gray brick Russian houses straggle along a bumpy road bordered by open drains, with millet and sweet potato fields stretching beyond. Occasional recently built Chinese structures give the appearance of new patches on an ancient garment.

This is the so-called international settlement and is well named. Wretched looking White Russian refugees abound. Korean women smoke their pipes in half-open doorways. Occasional European consular compounds form islands of respectability, the American Consulate, occupying a series of large and gaudy temple buildings, being particularly imposing, while a stately Georgian structure upholds the dignity of Great Britain.

Coal Balls, Sweet Cakes, Fly Swatters

Suddenly the carriage winds through a towered and tortuously curved gateway in the walls of the Chinese city. Uneasy smells increase into a distinct malodorous certainty. One-storied gray brick, gray tiled houses line a deeply rutted roadway. Blue cotton clothes are worn with the monotony of uniforms. Cheerful, unwashed, yellow faces flow past in continuous streams. Perpetual and strident bargaining fills the air. Coal balls, sweet cakes, fly swatters, and boiling tea water are hawked with shrill cries and ringing bells.

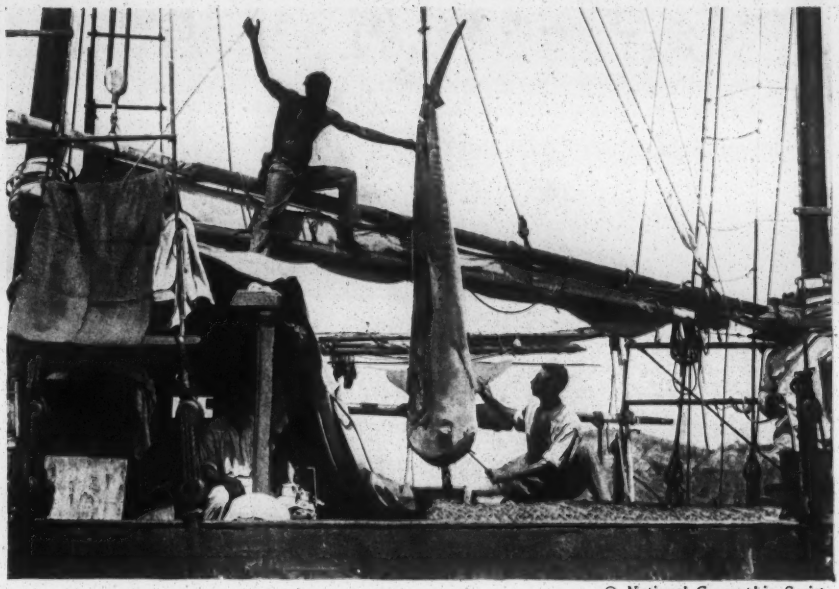
Such is the ancient Manchu capital from which the dynastic throne was moved to Peking, in the seventeenth century, after the Manchu conquest of China. The huge palace of the successors of Ghengis Khan still dominates the city with its

White Meat Canned for Market

American tanners have experimented in the production of leathers from these hides with excellent results. There now exists a demand for large quantities of raw materials. In tensile strength, leathers tested compare favorably with those made from mammal hides, and the market for these products appears assured.

A shark hide will produce from 10 to 40 square feet of leather suitable for shoes. Five hundred skins a week are said to be handled at one tannery. The meat of the shark is white and edible, resembling halibut. It is canned, and dried for shipment to the markets.

Bulletin No. 3, January 9, 1928.



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A 14-FOOT MAN-EATING SHARK PROVIDES A FEAST FOR A MALAY CREW

The white meat of the shark is edible. Where sharks are caught for commercial purposes the white meat is canned for market.

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Bath, England, Honors Its Planner

LONG before town planning became a familiar term, John Wood of Bath was a town planner.

Proud citizens of Bath have celebrated recently the 200th anniversary of John Wood's work which did much to make Bath, "the city of palaces, town of hills, hill of towns," and earned it a place in one recent list of the twenty most beautiful cities of the world. The ceremony was concluded by the laying of a wreath on the step of Wood's own house facing one of the splendid squares which he planned.

Bath owes its name, growth and prosperity to the mineral springs around which it is built. They are the only hot springs in the British Isles and yield daily more than half a million gallons of water.

While the Romans are known to have founded Bath in the first century and to have built an elaborate system of bathing places, legend has it that about 800 years earlier the medicinal qualities of the springs were discovered by Bladud, a British swineherd prince. Bladud was expelled from the court as a leper and wandered westward. By rolling in the mud where the famous baths now are located, he is said to have regained his health.

Palaces on Terraces Give Bath Name of "Florence of England"

From the days of the Romans until the early part of the eighteenth century, Bath remained an humble English town, occupying the eastern bank of the Avon at a beautiful bend in the river about 12 miles south of Bristol. Then excavators uncovered old Roman relics. Visitors came from all corners of England and the Continent, and the little town was overwhelmed. John Wood, a prominent Bath citizen and architect, was designated to lay out and build a modern city to accommodate the newcomers. Thus the slopes back of the old town that once were covered with forests became a series of beautiful terraces upon which handsome eighteenth-century English houses are built. Numerous parks, terraced walks, circles and crescents add to the city's beauty. One writer called Bath the "Florence of England."

Richard (Beau) Nash was appointed master of ceremonies of Bath when the leisure throngs became unwieldy and the streets were beset by footpads. Frequent attempts were made to discredit the resort, but visits of royalty in 1734 and 1738 made the city a fashion center.

Mural tablets on houses and inns along the wide streets of Bath attest its popularity. They bear such names as David Livingstone, Major Andre, Charles Dickens, Edmund Burke, Sir Walter Scott, Dr. Johnson and James Boswell, and other famous persons. Gainsborough began his career at Bath, and Jane Austen, Addison, Pope and Goldsmith visited and described the resort in their writings.

"Who's Who" of 18th Century Met in Pump Room

Bath's popularity was brief. In less than thirty years it began to give way to new English and Continental resorts. But the model eighteenth-century city, with its beautiful homes and what is left of the bath houses, remains as a reminder of the gay center of less than 200 years ago.

The Pump Room, formerly the favorite meeting place of all the "Who's

gaudy emptiness, and tombs of Manchu rulers with columned halls and curving eaves brood in lonely magnificence in forests outside the city walls.*

These few heirlooms from an historic past lie like soiled jewels in the mud-colored monotony of a dirty commercial city. Modern Mukden is wholly absorbed in trade. Lying in the center of a rich agricultural plain, it forms the meeting point of two great railway systems. One, running east and west, connects Tokyo and Chosen (Korea) with Peking; the other, north and south, joins Port Arthur and Dairen to the Trans-Siberian Railway. A monument to its commercial importance as well as to fallen soldiers is the modest war memorial of the Japanese heroes who fell in the historic Battle of Mukden during the Russo-Japanese War.

New York Buyers Attend Fur Market

Although in the same latitude as Chicago and Boston, Mukden has a rather severe climate of the so-called "continental" type. Winters are long and cold; summers short but torrid. The hot season, however, ripens surrounding miles of beans and giant sorghum, making Mukden the bean cake and bean oil market as well as the alcohol distilling center of North China. Cold winters bring a season of intense activity in the fur market. Buyers from the New York fur houses bargain with traders from the north for sizes and grades of all kinds of skins from dog to marten and from Siberian squirrel to Manchurian tiger.

Surrounding coal mines furnish abundant supplies for a bustling railway center. On the other hand, water is comparatively scarce for a large part of the year. The relative disproportion between these two elements is probably responsible for the grimy complexion of Manchuria's somber but seething capital, now given over to the grim business of furnishing a military headquarters.

* "Mukden, the Manchu Home, and Its Great Art Museum," with 30 illustrations, National Geographic Magazine, April, 1910.

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A SHOE SHOP IN MUKDEN

This scene is in the Chinese quarter of Mukden, which is three cities in one. In addition to the Chinese section there is the very modern Japanese section and the foreign quarter where are the consulates of various nations and the Russian community.

Who" of Bath, is deserted except for the occasional visit of an inhabitant who goes there to purchase a drink of the lukewarm spring water. It is a spacious stucco building, ornamented with two Corinthian pillars on either side of the doorway. An annex contains relics of Roman days, including intaglios and a small Saxon Cross said to have belonged to the Queen of Edward the Elder.

Lead Floor Put Down by Romans Still Intact

Next door the Roman baths are housed in a modern building. The central corridor leading from the street is flanked with a large concert hall, reading and drawing rooms. Beyond the steps leading to the bathing pool, which is 20 feet below the street level, is a gallery containing modern busts of famous Romans. When the Romans occupied Bath, it is believed the pool covered an acre. Now it is a rectangular pool 82 by 40 feet, surrounded by the original twelve colonnades that probably once supported a roof. The original lead floor, weighing 40 pounds to the square foot, also remains.

There are several other more modern baths, all within a radius of two blocks. Nearby is the Abbey Church which was built more than 400 years ago. Its numerous windows earned for it the title of the "Lantern of the West." It is said that when a person of sufficient social standing arrived at Bath during its prosperous days the four and twenty bells of the Abbey pealed a boisterous welcome.

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THE MANY LAKES SURROUNDING MEXICO CITY ARE CONNECTED WITH THE CAPITAL BY CANALS

These canals are used by the farmers living along the lakes to bring their produce to market by boat. The lakes formerly rose in time of heavy rains and endangered Mexico City until engineers drove a tunnel through a mountainside which drains them and maintains a constant level (see Bulletin No. 1).